things that are God's." He contended that they should "obey first and argue afterwards" because "God will protect His own." Other congregations heard similar arguments, including Mt. Zion Afro-American Methodist Church where Pastor J. W. Telfair preached a funeral sermon for Sam McFarland, a casualty of the riot. Telfair described the tenth as a catastrophe wrought by God and that the congregation should "obey the law and keep the peace." Chestnut Street Presbyterian Church's pastor, J. A. Bonner, also preached submission to the will of God and white authority. At Christ Colored Congregational Church, F. C. Ragland's sermon encouraged members to "love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you and pray for them that abuse you." He also reminded the congregation of the abiding words spoken by their enslaved forefathers when he said that "God will avenge us" because "in His hands shall it rest," and that "He will act in His own good time." Ebenezer Baptist's minister also preached on following the letter of the law. St. Luke's African Methodist Episcopal Church, next door to the burned out remains of Manly's press, heard its minister, M. L. Blalock, discuss the fiery trials of Biblical figures and claim that "if the negro trusted in God and minded his own business . . . all would be well." [32]

In line with the ministers' pleas, blacks tempered their reactions in ways designed to restore peace, prevent further deaths, and encourage others to strive for calm. A letter from S. B. Hunter, a Wilmington resident and church leader, published in the papers endorsed appeasement. He explained that he voted without incident and that he believed the city's black women were as responsible as any other group for the violence. He claimed the women's threats against black men, challenging the men to violence, helped to fuel the conflict. [33] John C. Dancy, black Republican leader in local and state politics, explained that he tried to work with Manly to appease whites before the riot. He was quoted as saying that he was not forced out of town by whites but had left after calm was brought to the city. He urged that "people exercise good judgment" in order to relieve the "perturbed situation in the state" because he felt that "calm reason may appease." [34]

On the national level, following the rioting in the two Carolinas, conferences were held throughout the nation to protest against the Democrats' actions in the South.[35] One of the main organizing forces

[32] It is unclear how the newspapers were able to access such detailed snippets of all the sermons given at such a wide variety of African American churches, but, in printing the passages from the various ministers, the papers reinforced submission to whites to non-churchgoing blacks and demonstrated to whites that black leaders who remained were encouraging others not to retaliate. The article containing the sermon extracts was written by a correspondent from the *Baltimore Sun* and published in Wilmington, Raleigh, and Baltimore. The article could have been another Democratic propaganda tool. *Wilmington Messenger*, November 15, 1898; *Evening Dispatch* (Wilmington), November 15, 1898; *News and Observer* (Raleigh), November 15, 1898.

[33] *Morning Star* (Wilmington), November 15, 1898.

[34] Throughout the post-violence period, Dancy walked a fine line between his black community and his attempts to hold the respect of white leaders as he sought to bridge the gap between the two and prevent further violence and hatred. Dancy's son wrote his memoirs and recalled that his father had been out of town on the day of the riot and that his step-mother frantically gathered her children to evacuate the city. *Evening Dispatch* (Wilmington), November 23, 1898; John Dancy, *Sand Against the Wind*, 69-70.

[35] The election day violence in Phoenix, South Carolina, and Wilmington's violence two days later were viewed by many northerners as evidence of the troubled nature of Southern black/white relations. Further evidence for these reformers were the laws on the books in many states, including Louisiana and Georgia, which limited African American suffrage.